

Leading Ways: HOW YOU LEAD WHEN IT REALLY MATTERS

"It was the time when they loved each other best, without hurry or excess, when both were most conscious of and grateful for their incredible victories over adversity."

-Gabriel García Márquez, Love in the Time of Cholera

While many of us are still on the path to becoming better leaders, we all currently have leadership skills that can start to feel natural and even easy. As they should, for comfortable times or the normal routine, this is exactly how it is meant to be. But, in many cases leadership is measured only when put to the test, when we face conflict head on, guide through the storm or overcome adversity.

When we are met with those hard times, here are some points to help you remain on course.

Take the lead

Right now we need leadership and action, but not over reaction. Things are moving, but if they are slow with your organization, it's up to you to get ahead of them. Your response will make everyone feel that things are being done. Ask them for commitment and action as that will give them more of a sense of efficacy. Better now to ask forgiveness than permission. This is the test of real leadership.

Affirm the uncertainty

It seems uncertain because it is. Affirm that. This is not the time for false bravado, half-truths and saying it will be fine. None of these will make it better, they will only feed the uncertainty and doubt. Take a look back at this past writing on leading in [uncertain](#) times. It might be good to do a quick review of these tips of how you show up now when it is hard.

Connect to others

As the quote above reminds us, this is a time for connection to others. We are at our best when trying times turn us to others. And we will all do better when we pull together as a team and watch out for one another. Make sure that you encourage this basic human sentiment in your words and actions and find those better angels in each one of us.

Value priorities

This is the time when you will see what really must be done, do it while extending grace to ourselves and others when some things are not done. Real leaders understand and act on these principles. Try to remember that these priorities can be established, the work done, and life not fall apart when the crisis is over, so that you can apply some of that to how you lead.

Avoid the bunker

Yes, it's all different and the changes that are needed may seem overwhelming, but don't isolate yourself from life. Work has its priorities and so do you. Remember to get outside, play with your

kids, read the book that has been waiting, do the simple things that make your life worthwhile. This will help ground you and your decision making at work and give you valued perspective on all those that you are leading.

In the challenging times, let all of that leadership strengths shine through.